



May 2011

Santa Rosa County District 5 Newsletter

A Message From Your Commissioner



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Summer is rapidly approaching and I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful northwest Florida weather we've been having this spring.

Exciting changes are on the horizon for south Santa Rosa County! The new franchised solid waste/garbage disposal service is scheduled to begin on July 1. This is a huge step forward for our area, and will bring our residents the highest level of service available in the county. WastePro and Waste Management will serve the Gulf Breeze and Navarre areas, respectively. The service will cost between \$51 and \$53 per quarter. For this price, our residents are going to receive twice a week garbage pick-up, weekly recycling in large rolling bins, yard trash/debris removal every other week, and bulk item pick-up on demand. We plan to start publicizing the new service, along with how to sign-up, in conjunction with the waste haulers in the coming weeks. Look for more information on this soon, and you can also find out more about the service on the county's website.

Along with the rest of the state and country, our economy still has not fully recovered from the recession. That being said, we have seen some positive signs in the last six months as Santa Rosa County continues to be one of the regional leaders in growth. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and 7th Special Forces Group at Eglin are having a positive impact on the residential housing market in Santa Rosa County. Hopefully this trend will continue as more service personnel continue to relocate to our area. Historically, the significant military presence in Santa Rosa County and our sister counties has had a stabilizing effect on our local economy.

We have also seen the emergence of technology as a key component of our economic growth and development. Your county commission, together with TEAM Santa Rosa and other local economic and business organizations, will continue to do all we can to improve the business climate in Santa Rosa County and attract businesses and job opportunities to our area. The high quality of life that we enjoy in Santa Rosa County continues to be a major draw for people coming into our area. Public safety, infrastructure, education and a strong economy are imperative for Santa Rosa County to continue to attract new residents and businesses. As always, I am proud to call Santa Rosa County my home, and I appreciate the opportunity to serve on the Board of County Commissioners.

**Lane Lynchard
District 5 Commissioner &
Commission Chair**

Santa Rosa County Plan Ranked Number One

Santa Rosa County's Flood Mitigation Plan has been ranked number one in the nation out of all the Community Rating System, or CRS, communities that have a Flood Mitigation Plan, according to the Insurance Services Office. What does this mean to the average citizen? Well, having a Flood Mitigation Plan is the first step in reducing the communities risk of suffering damage during a flood. Mitigation planning is the process of developing a set of actions designed to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from the effects of hazards.

As the name suggests, a Flood Mitigation Plan is specific to flooding. In this type of plan, you would identify your community's flood risk, for example what parts of the community flood, what type of floods tend to occur and then develop a plan to reduce flood damage through structural or non-structural mitigation projects. Generally, a hazard mitigation plan does several things:

Continued on page 2...



Santa Rosa District 5 News

South End Residential Solid Waste Franchise Service Begins July 1

The Santa Rosa County Board of Commissioners has entered into contracts with Waste Management of Florida and Waste Pro of Florida Inc. to provide residential solid waste collection services for the south end of Santa Rosa County. Citizens utilizing residential curbside collection in the south end of the county, generally in the unincorporated areas of the 32563 and 32566 zip codes, will now have a single solid waste provider assigned to their area. Waste Pro will provide services for residents in the 32563 zip code and Waste Management for residents in zip code 32566. To determine which provider will service a specific address, visit www.santarosa.fl.gov/solidwaste. The initial contract term will be for three years and does not include commercial solid waste service.

Both companies will provide curb side service for garbage pick-up twice per week, once a week recycling pick up in a wheeled cart, yard waste pickup every other week and bulk waste pickup on demand.

Quarterly service charges will be \$51.45 with Waste Pro and \$53.40 with Waste Management. Both contracts limit annual rate increases based on increases to the Consumer Price Index, and cap rate increases to a maximum of four percent per year. In addition to the basic services, residents can also request side door collection service for the non-handicapped, additional barrels or bear resistant barrels at an additional cost.

The process to consolidate residential waste haulers in the south end of Santa Rosa County began almost four years ago with a three year advance notice of intent to franchise areas sent to waste haulers and the public. Based on discussions with citizens, a review of the level of services currently available, and services provided in other Florida counties, the Santa Rosa Board of County Commissioners released a Request for Proposal for Solid Waste Services in late 2010. One single residential solid waste hauler will have many benefits:

- More services for a reduced cost to our residents- economy of scale
- Added convenience as residents will no longer have to haul bulking items, yard waste and recycling
- Helps alleviate traffic from multiple haulers in subdivisions
- Prevents excess wear and tear on roads
- One service provider to be held accountable for damage or clean up
- Helps the county meet state recycling targets
- Less litter/illegal dumping

For more information, contact the Santa Rosa County Environmental Department at (850) 981-7135 or visit www.santarosa.fl.gov/solidwaste.

...Continued from page 1

1. It identifies the hazards in the community and it develops a plan to reduce the community's risk of suffering damage from those hazards.
2. Santa Rosa County must have a hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for hazard mitigation grant money from FEMA and State of Florida Emergency Management. Our Local Mitigation Strategy Plan or LMS Plan meets this requirement and our Flood Mitigation Plan has been incorporated into the LMS plan.
3. The CRS Rating for the jurisdictions can be affected, thereby affecting flood insurance discounts. Santa Rosa County Unincorporated has applied for a change to their CRS Class Rating and is currently waiting on FEMA approval for a class change.

This Multi-Jurisdictional Flood Mitigation Plan took more than a year to complete. The plan was paid for by a FMA planning grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency Department of Homeland Security through the State of Florida Department of Emergency Management. The grant was 75/25 match. Meaning that 75 percent was paid for by the grant and the county's 25 percent match was met through in kind services of staff time. This grant allowed the county to hire a contractor to assist with the writing of the plan and CRS Max was selected. The LMS Committee appointed a Flood Mitigation Task Force (pictured left) which included employees from Santa Rosa County, city of Gulf Breeze, city of Milton, town of Jay, as well as private citizens and representatives from local businesses. Once the plan was written, it was submitted to the State of Florida for review. When approved by the State of Florida, it was submitted to FEMA for approval. The final approved plan has been adopted by all the local jurisdictions and is available for viewing on the Santa Rosa County website at: www.santarosa.fl.gov/lmsc/index.html.





Santa Rosa District 5 News

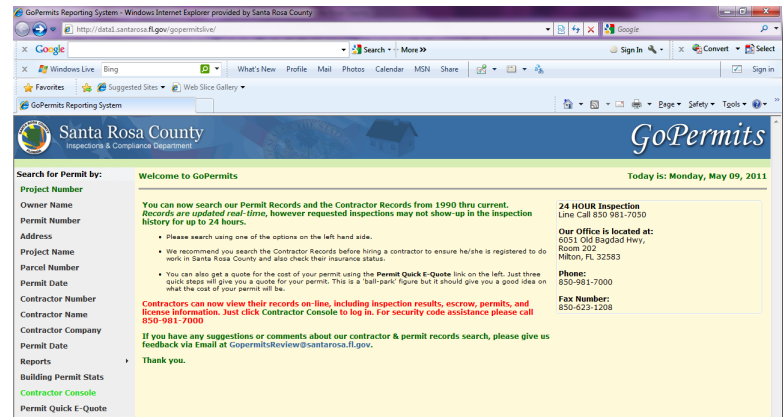
GoPermits: Building Permitting and Inspection Software Offers Addition to Contractor's Online Tool Belt

December 2010 marked the one year anniversary of the county's new building permitting and inspection software, GoPermits. GoPermits was developed in-house by the county's computer department. This cutting edge software replaced a permitting and inspection program that was also developed in-house in the early 1990's. The first year of use was spent tweaking the software in order to remove bugs and provide the "best fit" for the building department's day-to-day processes. After the first year, the building and computer departments began to focus on expanding GoPermits to provide new and convenient features as well as tools for our customers and the citizens of Santa Rosa County. In January 2011, the first phase of the web-based "contractor console" was made available to Santa Rosa County contractors. The contractor console provides contractors with several convenient tools and features, such as allowing them to view all of their permits, inspections and their escrow account history. Contractors also have the ability to view all of their license information that is logged into the county's records, including workers compensation and general liability insurance information.

General contractors now have the ability to see – in "real time" – the status of their permits and inspections, including if subcontractors have scheduled a needed inspection or if a scheduled inspection has passed or failed. This information is available to the contractor as soon as the inspector or permit technician enters the information into the system. With the anticipation of possibly providing online permitting, an additional layer of security was incorporated into the system which requires contractors to create a personal identification number that will be used each time they log in to the system.

Another feature that has been implemented into GoPermits is e-mail notification. If the contractor has an e-mail address on file, they will be notified immediately via e-mail of inspection results. This feature will allow them to respond more quickly to items that may need to be corrected on the job site. An e-mail is also generated and sent to the general

contractor to inform them of when the power company has been notified to connect electricity to a structure.



The public version of GoPermits online allows the general public to search permit records back to 1990. This feature will benefit citizens, real estate professionals, insurance professionals and other interested parties that wish to check for outstanding permits and find information about the construction of and work done on a building. Citizens and suppliers can also search new residential or commercial construction by using the report feature in GoPermits.

The computer department has also created a code compliance database, GoCompliance. This software functions as the centralized database for the county's code compliance division, allowing staff to more easily track compliance cases from start to finish. Typical compliance cases include investigations into complaints from buildings constructed without permits to derelict vehicles. Citizens can file complaints online (anonymously, if desired) and use the public version of GoCompliance to track the status of the case. Similar to the benefits of GoPermits, citizens and other interested parties can search for violations and compliant history relating to properties they wish to purchase or sell.

Drainage Project Update

Several drainage projects in District 5 have been completed or are under construction. These projects will remedy known drainage projects and will provide greater protection for properties that have experienced flooding in past rain events. Two of the projects, Greenbriar and Orion Lake, have been completed and both were under budget. Three projects, Villa Venyce, Ganges/Madura and Sabertooth, are currently underway and are expected to be complete by the end of summer or early Fall. The Harrison Avenue project is pending successful agreements with property owners for necessary easements. Unfortunately, the Ramblewood project will not be completed due to unsuccessful negotiations with property owners to obtain the property needed to complete the project. Funding for these projects was made available through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) which provides 75 percent federal funding with the local match of 25 percent coming from the county's Electric Franchise Fee Drainage Reserve Funds.



Santa Rosa District 5 News



With the start of hurricane season only one month away, Santa Rosa and Escambia counties are joining together to help residents prepare for the upcoming hurricane season with "Project Prepare- Countdown to Hurricane Season." Project Prepare offers residents simple tips on how to prepare their family and homes for the hurricane season which begins June 1 and ends November 30. A tip will be provided for each day during the month of May.

Despite very active hurricane seasons over the last 10 years, our area has been very fortunate to have no major storm impact since Hurricane Dennis in 2005. It is easy to become complacent, but residents are reminded that no matter how many storms are predicted in a hurricane season, it only takes one storm to change our lives dramatically. Everyone has a responsibility to be self sufficient for three to five days. Do not wait until a storm enters the Gulf of Mexico to prepare!

Daily Tips for May 12-31

May 12: Inspect your trees before a storm strikes. Prevent damage by trimming trees and removing dead limbs or branches. Do not "top" your trees as that may weaken the tree. Consider removing trees that are decayed, hollow, aged, significantly leaning or that have cracks in the trunk.

May 13: Know when and how to go. Check to see if your home is in an evacuation zone. Know the evacuation routes, including an alternate route. Santa Rosa County – www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency

May 14: If you live in an evacuation zone or mobile home, plan now where you will go during a storm. You don't have to drive hundreds of miles out of town. Ask family or friends, find a hotel in a safe area of the county, or know where the public shelters are and how to get there.

May 15: Understand the difference between a weather watch and warning and the actions you need to take for each.

May 16: Learn how to shut off your water, gas and electricity properly. Know where to find shut-off valves and switches. Keep the area free of obstructions like storage items or grass/plants.

May 17: Your best defense in any disaster is a NOAA Weather Radio. It is inexpensive and programmable for area specific information. Equip your home and workplace with a weather radio- it may just save your life.

May 18: Keep important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container or scan them and save on a flash drive, discs or external backup devices.

May 19: Make sure you have a plan to care for your pet if you evacuate or stay at a pet friendly shelter. You should pre-register your pets to use the pet friendly shelter. For more information call (850) 983-4680.

May 20: Business owners- do you have a plan for how to continue business operations if a hurricane affects our area? Are you prepared to manage the five "P's" - people, property, products, processes, and partners? A business continuity plan can answer these questions and more. It can help you stay operational even if disaster affects your business.

May 21: Take photos or videos of your home and valuables from all angles and keep hard or electronic copies with your important papers. Your property may not look the same once the storm passes.

May 22: Learn how you can help your community before, during and after a disaster strikes. Get CERT or Community Emergency Response Team training. For more information visit www.citizencorps.gov/cert.

May 23: Know how to contact your county's Citizen Information Center. During a disaster staff will be available to take your call at (850) 983-4636.

May 24: If you plan to utilize the special needs shelter, you should pre-register. In Santa Rosa call (850) 983-5360.

May 25: Have a small amount of cash available at all times. If the power is out, ATMs and store credit card machines may not work.

May 26: Prepare your home now. Examine your roof for loose or broken shingles that need to be repaired. Clear clogged rain gutters and down spouts.

May 27: Check your insurance coverage; flood losses aren't usually covered by your homeowners' insurance policy. Floodwaters can damage your home and your financial future. Learn about the National Flood Insurance Program at 1-888-379-9531 or www.floodsmart.gov.

May 28: Prepare to keep your home safe now. Sand bags and tarps can be purchased year round at local supply and hardware stores.

May 29: Don't wait for a storm to be in the Gulf of Mexico for protective window coverings like plywood sheets. Buy and cut now, or even better, purchase hurricane shutters. Taping windows does not prevent windows from breaking or flying debris from entering your home.

May 30: If you plan to use a generator, make sure you have a CO detector, gas cans, inverters, extension cords, fuel stabilizers and lubricants on hand before a storm strikes. Never use a generator inside!

May 31: Are you ready? Learn more about how to prepare for a hurricane or any disaster. Santa Rosa residents, pick up the county's annual disaster guide in county offices, libraries or local retailers or visit www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency.